

CAC CURRICULUM MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING DATE 10/21/2014

ATTENDANCE: Brock Friedman, Melissa Lane, Trisha Shrode – U-46 Liaison, Julie Winterhalder, Ian Horn, Lisa Hopp, Salvatore Terracciano, Christiana Terracciano, Nadia Attia, Suzie Sias, Pat Kressin, Michelle Esquivel, Amy Turkot – teacher presenter, Moses Irizarry – teacher presenter, Kevin Wiland – U-46 Math Coordinator, unknown – teacher coach for math.

Meeting called to order. Minutes were approved with the following changes: 1. Engage NY is not a pilot program, but is a fully adopted and approved program. It is being rolled out in stages, with some early implementers using the resource this year, at an average of 1 classroom per Elementary School. 2. The resource does not come fully equipped with Spanish translation of materials but Kevin Wiland states that Spanish translations have been prepared (by U-46) and are being used. Brock moved to accept the minutes, and Julie seconded, with the above changes noted.

Engage NY – Kevin Wiland is the Math Coordinator for k-12 in District U-46. He and some colleagues shared information about the Engage NY resource that is being implemented by some teachers in the elementary grades. With him were Amy Turkot, and Moses Irizarry, elementary teachers, and ????????, a Math teacher Coach.

Kevin shared some of the resources available for Engage NY. There were a lot of questions and several rebuttals. I will try to capture the main points here.

- Engage NY is a resource, not a curriculum. The curriculum was created with the input of many teachers and administrative staff. Engage NY is a free resource that meets the need of a resource that is rigorous and concentrates on fluency and concepts.
- Information about Engage NY is found in the Mathematics section of the U-46 website. Parent resources are found there.
 - Rebuttals from the audience –
 - How would a parent know to look at something that says Lafayette?
 - How does a parent even know if their students are in EverydayMath or Engage NY?
 - How has, or is, this information being communicated to parents?
- Sample newsletters were distributed that are available for teachers to share with parents.
 - Rebuttals –
 - Some parents have received, some have not. ???
 - The language of the newsletters is not user friendly – not geared to parents, “decompose” as opposed to break up, algorithm, precise.
 - The newsletters were not vetted by U-46 prior to being made available to teachers for parent distribution.
 - It is not a good idea to hand out a “parent newsletter” with the logo and info from another school district on its banner. Again, how would parents know that this information is available?

- Engage NY and the new curriculum is not about “answer getting” or “learning math tricks”, but is about understanding the underlying concepts.
- Secondary math classes, while still following the approved curriculum, have other resources that are more widely used than Engage NY. However, the occasional teacher may use some elements of Engage NY if they choose, for example, if it does a great job of illustrating a certain topic.
- The teachers who spoke were passionate about their students, and about using this Engage NY resource to its best end. Some teachers shared ideas or examples of methods that are working for them.
 - Rebuttals – (not directed specifically at the teachers, but at the system)
 - (As always in U-46) why are some teachers aware of these ideas and others are not?
 - Lack of consistency!!!
 - Personal Development? Required? Optional?
 - Early implementers are excited about math, so they are more likely to try new things – what about next year?
- Kevin shared the FAQ developed by U-46 for math curriculum and resources
 - Rebuttals –
 - Several acronyms –
- Another sheet of questions were shared. These questions (maybe) originated at the previous CAC General meeting where parents wrote questions on cards for later answers.
 - Rebuttals –
 - # 3 “Are you getting feedback from parents....” It seems as if the answer is the one the district would like to happen but it is not happening. One parent in particular mentioned that she has 3 students in 3 Engage NY classes, and her opinion has never been solicited. No parent surveys, no parent info nights, etc.
 - # 1 – re: “parent resources” – the explanation is good, but no-one who did not have this sheet in front of them would be able to navigate the website and find the answers - particularly under the heading Lafayette school district.
 - # 10 – Can a teacher use Engage NY, without being tapped as an early implementer? – Yes – This seems as if the teachers decide what they want to do, rather than taking guidance from the district – who is running the show?

General Summary – The district presentation raised as many questions as it answered. The teachers who are early implementers (the small group that we saw) seem passionate, well informed, and excited about teaching. The area of parent communication seems to have fallen short. Great idea and a possibly great resource, with poor to fair implementation.